

WORKFORCE OBSERVATIONS FOR WEST CENTRAL WISCONSIN COUNTIES

NOVEMBER 2003



State of Wisconsin
Department of Workforce Development

Second notice !

Only two more issues of the Workforce Observations will be mailed to readers. Beginning with the January issue, the publication will only be available electronically. You can receive electronic notification (email) of new issues by registering your address at: http://www.dwd.state.wi.us/lmi/wda/wo_pubs.htm. Electronic issues are available much sooner than mailed versions, roughly the third week of the month.

Unemployment rates continue to tumble in October

The unemployment rate for the Eau Claire-Chippewa metropolitan area dropped six-tenths of a percentage point in October. According to the Department of Workforce Development this was one of the largest reductions in unemployment rate on record for October. The October unemployment rate of 4.8 percent was down from September's 5.4 percent and from the rate one year ago of 5.0 percent.

The unemployment rate declined in all eleven of the state's metropolitan areas, but only Janesville-Beloit matched the reduction of the Eau Claire area. The Wisconsin seasonally adjusted rate dropped from 5.7 to 5.4 percent in October while the national rate declined from 6.1 to 6.0 percent. Not adjusted the October unemployment rate in Wisconsin was 4.6 percent and in the nation, 5.6 percent.

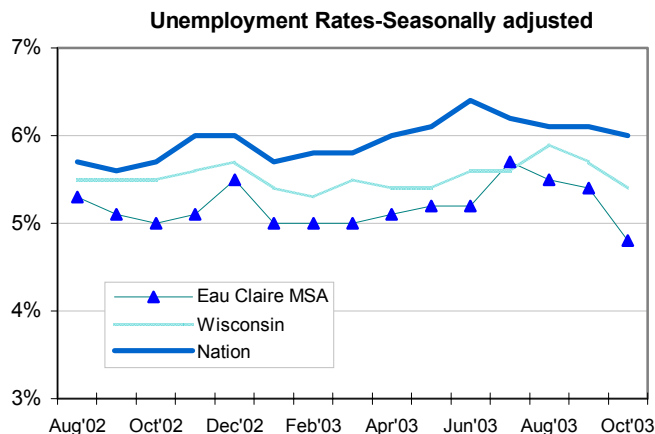
Unemployment rates typically decline from September to October but the magnitude of the local re-

duction was noteworthy. The number of unemployed in the metro area declined from 4,630 in September to 4,075 in October. This month's estimates did not include the lay offs from Mason Shoe because they occurred so late in the month.

The number of unemployed declined as some residents found jobs and others dropped out of the labor market. Seasonally adjusted, there were less than 100 additional jobholders in October, far less than the reduction in unemployment.

However, the unadjusted data shows a much larger increase in employment, from 81,950 in September to 82,770 in October. The addition of 800 workers tells us that most of the increase in jobs followed a seasonal pattern.

In fact, the difference of 800 in the unadjusted series matches the increase in nonfarm wage and salary jobs. The greatest share of the increase in jobs was in state and local government and when an increase that



	Aug'02	Sep'02	Oct'02	Aug'03	Sep'03	Oct'03
Eau Claire MSA	5.3%	5.1%	5.0%	5.5%	5.4%	4.8%
Wisconsin	5.5%	5.5%	5.5%	5.9%	5.7%	5.4%
Nation	5.7%	5.6%	5.7%	6.1%	6.1%	6.0%

October Civilian Labor Force Estimates, not seasonally adjusted, for West Central Wisconsin counties

	Barron			Chippewa			Clark			Dunn			Eau Claire Co.		
	Oct '03	Sep '03	Oct '02	Oct '03	Sep '03	Oct '02	Oct '03	Sep '03	Oct '02	Oct '03	Sep '03	Oct '02	Oct '03	Sep '03	Oct '02
Civilian labor force	25,473	25,432	24,316	31,510	31,282	31,252	16,267	15,914	15,688	23,805	22,667	23,045	54,476	54,195	53,887
Employed	24,223	24,188	23,260	30,158	29,862	29,802	15,516	15,141	14,953	23,097	21,865	22,334	52,613	52,096	51,990
Unemployed	1,250	1,244	1,056	1,352	1,420	1,450	751	773	735	708	802	711	1,863	2,099	1,897
% unemployed	4.9	4.9	4.3	4.3	4.5	4.6	4.6	4.9	4.7	3.0	3.5	3.1	3.4	3.9	3.5

	Pepin			Pierce			Polk			St. Croix			West Central region		
	Oct '03	Sep '03	Oct '02	Oct '03	Sep '03	Oct '02	Oct '03	Sep '03	Oct '02	Oct '03	Sep '03	Oct '02	Oct '03	Sep '03	Oct '02
Civilian labor force	3,502	3,447	3,286	21,271	21,175	20,910	23,878	23,943	23,369	37,268	37,508	36,677	237,450	235,563	232,430
Employed	3,389	3,324	3,170	20,500	20,387	20,055	22,806	22,708	22,263	35,537	35,341	34,765	227,839	224,912	222,592
Unemployed	113	123	116	771	788	855	1,072	1,235	1,106	1,731	2,167	1,912	9,611	10,651	9,838
% unemployed	3.2	3.6	3.5	3.6	3.7	4.1	4.5	5.2	4.7	4.6	5.8	5.2	4.0	4.5	4.2

* not seasonally adjusted

Industry Employment Estimate for West Central Wisconsin: Current month - October 2003

(Employment in thousands)	Barron			Clark			Dunn			Pepin		
	Oct '03	Sep '03	Oct '02	Oct '03	Sep '03	Oct '02	Oct '03	Sep '03	Oct '02	Oct '03	Sep '03	Oct '02
Total Nonfarm	22.4	22.5	21.9	10.2	10.1	9.9	16.4	15.6	16.3	2.4	2.4	2.3
Const/Min'g/Nat. Resources	0.8	0.8	0.8	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.7	0.7	0.8	0.2	0.2	0.2
Manufacturing	6.3	6.6	6.4	2.6	2.6	2.7	2.2	2.2	2.2	0.2	0.2	0.2
Trade	3.5	3.5	3.5	1.5	1.5	1.5	2.7	2.6	2.5	0.5	0.5	0.5
Transportation & Utilities	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.4	0.4	0.4	1.7	1.7	1.7	0.1	0.1	0.1
Financial Activities	0.6	0.6	0.5	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.5	0.5	0.4	0.1	0.1	0.1
Education & Health Services	2.3	2.3	2.2	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.4	1.3	1.3	0.3	0.3	0.3
Leisure & Hospitality	1.9	2.0	1.9	0.8	0.8	0.7	1.6	1.7	1.5	0.5	0.5	0.3
Info/Prof. & Bus.Serv./Other	1.7	1.7	1.6	0.6	0.6	0.6	1.3	1.4	1.3	0.2	0.2	0.2
Total Government	4.9	4.6	4.5	2.2	2.0	2.1	4.4	3.6	4.6	0.5	0.5	0.6
	Pierce			Polk			St. Croix			Eau Claire MSA		
	Oct '03	Sep '03	Oct '02	Oct '03	Sep '03	Oct '02	Oct '03	Sep '03	Oct '02	Oct '03	Sep '03	Oct '02
Total Nonfarm	10.4	9.8	10.8	15.2	15.2	15.2	27.9	28.2	27.2	77.2	76.4	78.3
Const/Min'g/Nat. Resources	0.5	0.5	0.6	0.9	0.9	0.9	1.9	1.9	1.7	3.1	3.1	3.4
Manufacturing	1.1	1.1	0.8	3.7	3.7	3.9	5.8	6.0	6.1	10.2	10.2	11.4
Trade	0.9	0.9	1.2	2.0	2.0	2.1	4.4	4.3	4.2	13.1	13.0	12.7
Transportation & Utilities	0.4	0.4	0.5	0.3	0.3	0.3	1.0	1.0	1.0	2.7	2.7	2.8
Financial Activities	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.6	0.6	0.5	1.1	1.1	1.0	3.8	3.8	3.7
Education & Health Services	1.1	1.1	1.1	2.1	2.1	2.0	2.9	2.9	2.8	12.5	12.4	12.2
Leisure & Hospitality	1.4	1.5	1.3	1.3	1.3	1.3	3.5	3.9	3.2	7.3	7.6	7.4
Information/Prof. & Bus.Serv.	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.5	1.5	1.5	3.6	3.6	3.5	8.0	8.0	8.0
Other Services	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	3.8	3.8	3.7
Total Government	3.5	2.8	3.8	2.8	2.7	2.7	3.7	3.6	3.8	12.7	11.8	13.0

Current month preliminary. Estimates based on March 2002 benchmark. Summing from unrounded numbers.

large occurs in September and October it is generally associated with education. However, there were 300 fewer government jobs this year compared with last October.

The last few weeks have produced some glimmers that the hemorrhage of jobs from manufacturing employers has ended, especially in the nation. Manufacturing employment in October was unchanged from September, and even though there has been news locally that the economy is turning it is still too soon to report a turn-around. Manufacturing employment is still 1,200 shy of the number of jobs last October.

In the rural counties surrounding the metro area manufacturing jobs declined another 500 in October. The majority of this reduction was from vegetable processors as the season wound down and the most noticeable changes occurred in Barron and St. Croix counties.

Jobs in leisure and hospitality also declined in October as the summer tourist season ended. There were nearly 700 fewer jobs in October but over the year the industry in the rural counties was 700 jobs ahead of last year.

Overall, nonfarm jobs in the seven rural counties increased from 103,700 in September to 104,900 in October. The additional jobs affected the labor force esti-

mates where total employment in the West Central region increased from 224,900 in September to 227,800 in October. And, as the number of jobs increased, the number of unemployed declined.

The total number of unemployed in the region declined from 10,651 in September to 9,611 in October. The result was a lower unemployment rate. In October the regional unemployment rate was 4.5 percent, down from 4.0 in September and from 4.2 one year ago.

Eight of the region's nine counties posted a lower unemployment rate in October, as did 59 of the state's 72 counties. The unemployment rate in Barron County was unchanged from September. With a 4.9 percent unemployment rate, Barron County ranked 21st highest in the state and highest among the West Central counties.

Initial claims for unemployment compensation throughout the United States have been declining in the last several weeks, but in West Central Wisconsin there has been an increase. Some of this is due to seasonal lay offs, but continued claims for benefits are again above the levels for the same weeks one year ago. This is occurring both in the metropolitan area and in the rural counties. For the week that ended November 15, 2003, there were 2,141 claims in the metro area, 139 more than year ago; and 2,885 claims in the rural counties, 220 more than one year earlier.

Look for the most current Labor Market Information at: WWW.DWD.STATE.WI.US/LMI

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